

VZCZCXRO3806
PP RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHNEH
DE RUEHNE #3041/01 3371143
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 021143Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4482
INFO RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/PACOM IDHS HONOLULU HI
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1327
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI 3899
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 3139
RUEHNEH/AMCONSUL HYDERABAD
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1700
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5530
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 2160
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 9123
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI 2961
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 5579
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 7255
RHOVVKG/COMSEVENTHFLT
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 08 NEW DELHI 003041

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NP, AC, PM

STATE FOR INR/MR

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

STATE FOR SCA/PPD, PA/RRU

STATE FOR AID/APRE-A

USDOC FOR 4530/IEP/ANESA/OSA FOR BILL MURPHY

E.O. 12958:N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION (CONTINUED): MUMBAI
TERROR ATTACKS

This cable reports on relevant media reaction from
India's English and large non-English press.

SUMMARY: The Mumbai attack continued to dominate the
editorial pages today, with very little doubt left that
the origins of the attack lay within the borders of
Pakistan. Commentators gave the Indian government various
options and prescriptions for taing Pakistan - ranging
from severing the peace dialog, to limited military
action. Editorialists acknowledged that while there may
not be official Pakistani collusion in the attacks,
Pakistan needs to be held accountable for allowing anti-
India activities on its soil and that there are no more
soft options for India. Meanwhile, such is the Indian
public's disgust with the its political leadership that
after Pakistan, India's own political class is being
viewed by the media as its biggest enemy. End summary.

MUMBAI TERROR ATTACKS

[1](#)1. "DEALING WITH THE NEIGHBOR," editorial in the December
2 nationalist English Daily THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
(Circulation: 1.6 million). "There is little doubt that
the origins of the Mumbai terror attack lie within the
borders of Pakistan. India could consider severing the
peace process and rolling up the trans-border links
painfully built up over the past several years. However,
it is important to recognize these connections were
backed by New Delhi with an eye to slowly chipping away

at the military-militant mindset in Pakistan. The Lashkar would actually cheer such a move ... A full-scale war is pointless in a nuclear environment. New Delhi needs to look harder at the idea of limited military action, perhaps striking only LeT camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Islamabad may well strike back. But, to be hard-nosed about things, the body count is less important than the need to send a message: as long as the Pakistani State tolerates terrorists within its border, it should expect to pay a price for the acts of such terrorists."

¶2. "NECESSARY BUT INSUFFICIENT," editorial in the December 2 Left-of-Center English Daily THE HINDU (Circulation: 5280000). "What should New Delhi do now? First, it must take up, and test, President Asif Ali Zardari's public expression of solidarity with India ... New Delhi should make a reasonable demand on Islamabad to cooperate with the ongoing criminal investigation in accordance with bilateral understandings and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 ... Confronted with such evidence, the Pakistan government will be left with the choice of finally acting to eliminate the Lashkar's infrastructure and resources - or making it clear to the whole world that the state, or intractable elements within it are complicit in the terrorism of this and perhaps other jihadist groups. Should Islamabad fail to act, the UPA government must resist the temptation of relying solely on the United States to crank up the pressure. Instead, it must use the multilateral instruments at its disposal and work with all the

NEW DELHI 00003041 002 OF 008

permanent members of the UNSC to build pressure on Pakistan's civilian government."

¶3. "COMMON ENEMY," editorial in the December 2 centrist English Daily THE INDIAN EXPRESS (estimated circulation: 200,000). "In talks with Rice, India's most important objective must be to end the many current restrictions on significant counter-terror bilateral cooperation with the U.S. Residual anti-Americanism in our security establishment has made it less than open; while the U.S. system has been reluctant to engage India on the sources of terrorism inside Pakistan. Given its dependence on the Pakistan army for the war on terror in Afghanistan, Washington has been hesitant to exchange intelligence on terror groups based in Pakistan. From its own experience, Washington now knows that the Pakistan army plays both sides of the street in Afghanistan ... India and the US must jointly measure up to the shared security challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan. New Delhi must contribute more to the international efforts in Afghanistan and the US must assist India in defeating the Pakistan based terror groups."

¶4. "HOW MUST INDIA RESPOND TO NEW TERROR?," commentary by Ashok Kumar Mehta, Major General (Retd): "The following steps should guide the task force which will construct the internal security architecture: - Depoliticize national security, insulating internal security from vote bank politics - Create a department of internal security to tackle not just terrorism but also Naxalism and insurgency under the watch of the prime minister on the lines of US department of homeland security - Define a national strategy for homeland security - Define a national strategy for homeland security - Overhaul and modernize intelligence policing, security, law enforcement."

¶5. "HOW MUST INDIA RESPOND TO NEW TERROR?," commentary by Ajai Sahni, Institute for Conflict Management in the December 2 pro-economic reforms English daily THE ECONOMIC TIMES (Circulation: 465,000): "There is a question of response to the very obvious role of Pakistan - and this is a palpable dead end. Even preliminary investigations have thrown up overwhelming evidence that

every string of control in the multiple terrorist strikes in Mumbai leads back to Pakistan and to the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) ... with US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice set to arrive at Delhi on December 3, on a visit that many expect (or, more likely, hope) will produce more than just a very strong 'message' to Islamabad. While all this will certainly make the powers that be in Pakistan squirm a bit, there is little reason to believe that the dynamic that has protected them in past and even greater transgressions, both in the region and well beyond, will not, once again, reassert itself."

¶6. "NO POINT IN DIALOGUE WITH PAK," analysis in the December 2 centrist English daily Mail Today by Kanwal Sibal, former foreign secretary. "Our policy towards Pakistan has exploded in our face. We have, terrorist after terrorist attack, rescued Pakistan by declaring

NEW DELHI 00003041 003 OF 008

that terrorists will not be allowed to derail our bilateral dialogue ... A country that deceives its friends cannot be honest with its enemies. Pakistan has adopted its traditional posture of asking for evidence, proclaiming its innocence, cautioning India against knee-jerk reactions and conveying a subtle warning that it will meet any Indian challenge unitedly as a nation. In a hardening of posture behind pro- forma protestations of friendship, the government is closing ranks with the ISI. The reaction of the Pakistan government is unacceptable politically. We must as first steps suspend the Composite Dialogue with Pakistan, freeze any CBMs in the offing and make public evidence of Pakistan's involvement."

¶7. "MATURE DIPLOMACY NEEDED," op-ed analysis in the December 2 centrist NAI DUNIYA Hindi daily (circulation 200,000) by former foreign secretary Shashank: "The kind of terror that we saw in Mumbai is new to India. So our response needs to be new too. This time foreigners have been targeted, obviously to attract international attention. There is no doubt that the strings of this terror are attached to Pakistan, but it may be pointed out that Pakistan may not be overtly involved. While formulating a response, we should remember that Pakistan itself is grappling with terror. Musharraf was targeted several times, and Benazir was assassinated by them. Pakistan is actually as much a victim of terror as us.... The world is focused on Mumabi today. We should avail of this opportunity and take the world community, particularly the two most influential nations of United States and China, with us in putting pressure on Pakistan."

¶8. "INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS SET BACK BY 7 YEARS," oped in December 2 right-of-center DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily (circulation 1.83 million): "Just when it looked like India and Pakistan were on their way to improving their ties and thrashing out contentious issues comes Mumbai! India has clearly said that it believes Pakistan is the culprit. The new U.S. Administration will now have to formulate its policy toward Pakistan very carefully. It cannot let Pakistan shirk its responsibility to fight terrorism on its soil. At the same time, the last thing they will want is Pakistani troops to be embroiled in any confrontation with India and ignore the war on terror on Pakistan's borders. Attention is shifting increasingly to the question whether the attacks on Mumbai were launched from Pakistani soil. Although there has not yet been any suggestion of official Pakistani collusion in or knowledge of the attacks, India places the blame on militant groups based in Pakistan."

¶9. "MUTUAL CO-OPERATION AND DIALOGUES: SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM" editorial in the December 2 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA (Circulation: 153,275), New Delhi: "After terror attack on Mumbai, the most important thing is to unveil the conspiracy behind this and nab the real

mentors of the terrorist without losing our temperament. Retaliation or waging war would only help the conspirator elements to succeed their plots. Pakistan and the ISI are being alleged for these occurrences. As Pakistan has also

NEW DELHI 00003041 004 OF 008

been a target of terrorist activities since a long time, it should come forward to co-operate with India. If this serious issue is not resolved through bilateral dialogues, co-operation and exchange of information about the activities of the terrorists; its consequences may be very dreadful for both the countries particularly for Pakistan."

¶10. "DON'T PLAY POLITICS" op-ed in the December 2 right-of-center Urdu daily HAMARA SAMAJ, New Delhi (Circulation: 63,000) by columnist Hasan Kamal: "The fact that a handful of anti-humanity forces succeeded to hold the India's biggest city and its millions of citizens captive, reveals that we are really a very soft target of anti-national elements. It (terrorist attack) may happen again and any where in the country. Probably we would have to live under the shadow of terror for a long time. We would not be able to combat the al-Qaeda like organizations and their Indian alternative Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) until and unless every Indian is not prepared to combat the menace of terrorism. On one hand, if we have to eliminate al-Qaeda; on the other hand we would also have to be very careful so that the martyred chief of ATS Hemant Karkare's investigations on terror activities in various part of the country could not go in vain who was sincerely unveiling the terror face of this organization (RSS)."

¶11. "RESIGNATION BY SHIVRAJ PATIL", editorial in December 1 right Urdu daily "MUNSIF", Hyderabad (Circulation: 60,009): "Tension between Indo-Pak relations is escalating due to unexpected reaction shown by Pakistan. Making a bitter comment on the tension, Pakistan Foreign Minister said that India would suffer more if it escalates. India held some elements in Pakistan responsible for Mumbai happenings. It did not accuse Pakistan itself. Despite, the harsh reaction by the Pakistan government is unfortunate. India and Pakistan are two neighboring countries. They have many common values. India is reeling under a very crucial time. Many issues have been surfaced up due to incessant terror activities. As a neighboring country, Pakistan should realize our problems."

¶12. "RESIGNATION BY SHIVRAJ PATIL", editorial in the December 1 right-of-center Urdu daily "SIASAT", Hyderabad (Circulation: 42,869): "Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was in troubled waters due to saffron organizations' role mentioned in Malegaon bomb-blasts investigations. On this account, BJP had opted for a defensive attitude abounding its enduring aggressive temperament. All big shots of BJP including L.K. Advani were engaged in denying their relations with those saffron activists, who were apprehended as culprits in Malegaon bomb-blasts. Sadhvi Pragya had allegedly, close relations with top leaders of BJP. It is also disclosed that the International Secretary of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has also alleged role in the aforesaid blasts. During these investigations, Mumbai was attacked by terrorists. About 200 innocent people were killed. The toll included foreign tourists, security officials and more

NEW DELHI 00003041 005 OF 008

importantly, those high-officials of Anti-Terror Squad (ATS), who worked hard to reveal the role of saffron Hindu Organizations in Malegaon bomb-blasts. However, the government should try to find out real culprits and their motives behind every blast and every attack. It should

also make the security agencies responsible as well as answerable."

¶13. "CONDI ON HER WAY TO READ INDIA'S PAK PULSE," front page story in December 2 centrist English daily THE TELEGRAPH (Circulation: 251,000) by New Delhi-based Diplomatic Correspondent Jayanth Jacob. "...On her way to take a measure of the strain in relations between New Delhi and Islamabad, Rice's unscheduled visit...will follow the summoning of Pakistan high commissioner Shahid Malik... The summoning...comes after foreign minister Pranab Mukherjee talked of 'elements in Pakistan' being behind the terror attacks. But the formality with which the message was given...is meant to convey the seriousness with which India intends to pursue the requests and demands it made to the Pakistan government ... As the freeze between New Delhi and Islamabad sets in, the arrival of Rice...highlights the concern in Washington over the immediate future in South Asia when US forces are operating in Afghanistan and Pakistan... Repercussions that a possible stand-off between the two countries can have on the fight on terror in Afghanistan - a key foreign policy imperative of President-elect Barack Obama as well - will form part of her discussions...."

¶14. "GOOD RIDDANCE," editorial in December 2 centrist English daily THE STATESMAN (Circulation: 178,000). "...It will...take more than a political and administrative reshuffle to convince that the various proposals now on the table will be pursued with due diligence. There is no overnight cure to the multi-dimensional failure that caused the security system to crumble, but if remedial action is now initiated and sustained then the Taj, Trident and Nariman House may prove more effective triggers than the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the hijack to Kandahar, the attack on Parliament House and countless bombings in major cities... Chidambaram does enjoy a reputation for efficiency and creates the impression of getting the professionals to deliver... All that should stand him in good stead in the immediate task of revamping internal security, but the job is a larger one...and he could come up short in terms of the political clout and persuasive power required to carry the states and the Opposition along with him... Chidambaram starts off with a considerable advantage - it is inconceivable that anyone can prove worse than his predecessor!"

¶15. "THE FOOLS RUSH IN," editorial page article in December 2 centrist English daily THE TELEGRAPH (Circulation: 251,000) by columnist Malvika Singh. "This is an attack on India, not a terrorist operation in Mumbai alone... It seems to be a combination of al Qaida, Taliban, as well as mercenaries and underworld characters who fled from Mumbai and now live as aliens elsewhere in the world... A paparazzi press is another aspect of 'terrorism'... The childish 'excitement' of the media,

NEW DELHI 00003041 006 OF 008

still learning to report and indulging in endless speculations that was sometimes intelligent but at other times foolish, only helped the horror to burn on... Much damage has been done. Lives were put under threat and some were lost. India did not win, the opposing guerrilla forces did... The invasion of Mumbai has shown us that the press must follow some ethics and norms in such situations where there is infinite danger to innocent lives...."

¶16. "PRESSURE ON PAKISTAN," editorial in December 2, left-of-center Kannada daily PRAJAVANI (circulation 550,000). "Pakistan and Afghanistan have become backyards and training bases for terrorists. Terrorists are being deployed from these camps not only against India, but also against several countries in the world. It is the responsibility of the international community to put pressure on Pakistan to see that the terrorist camps are

removed from there."

¶17. "A TOTAL CHANGE -NEED OF THE HOUR," editorial in December 2 independent Kannada daily KANNADA PRABHA (circulation: 180,000). "A new legislation should be enacted in the Parliament to curb the terrorist menace. It should be the first task of the next government to develop a federal agency to deal with terror."

¶18. "HOW FAR IS INDIA SAFE?" editorial page article in independent Kannada daily KANNADA PRABHA (circulation: 180,000). "The Americans have said that they were duty bound to help India but this was a moment to get a dozen world capitals together to talk tough to Pakistan and those behind the attacks that the attack was not just on India but against the values of freedom and democracy and therefore, India was not alone."

¶19. "TOLD TO QUIT," editorial in December 2 left-of-center English daily DECCAN HERALD (circulation: 350,000): "There was culpable laxity in implementing action plans which were meant to strengthen the security system in Mumbai and in other parts of the country. The message should be that there is a seriousness of purpose in dealing with the threat to the country and the lives of people."

¶20. "WIELDING SWORD" editorial in the December 2 independent Telugu daily SAKSHI (Circulation: 800,000): "When will the government set up a full fledged security agency in line with the FBI? When all evidence points to the involvement of Pakistani, how will the government deal with it?"

¶21. "POWER POLITICS" editorial in the December 2 independent Telugu daily EENADU (Circulation: 1 million). "Scrapping the POTA was a wrong step from the Manmohan Singh government. What is the government doing when dangerous elements from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan are operating from Indian soil to execute their terror agenda? When small Nation like Israel are tackling terrorism with an iron hand, is it not ridiculous to

NEW DELHI 00003041 007 OF 008

spend millions of rupees on security forces without any big results?"

¶22. "WHEN THE CROOK MOCKS AT THE GENUINE!" editorial in the December 2, 2008 Mumbai-based right-of-center Gujarati daily MUMBAI SAMACHAR (circ: 200,000). "Despite clear indications of Pakistan's involvement in the recent terror strikes in Mumbai, our neighbor continues to deny its complicity in this horrendous attacks. Pakistan is demanding hard evidence from India to substantiate its accusations. Does India now need to provide a video shooting as proof? Every terror attack in India has Pakistani connection directly or indirectly. Despite this, Pakistan continues to blow the 'provide proof' trumpet. What does Pakistan have to say about Kargil? At that point of time, it even refused to accept the bodies of its soldiers killed in the battle.... Besides, did America provide proof after 9/11 incidents for its actions? The need of the hour [for India] is to imitate what America did post 9/11 vis-à-vis its actions in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is also high time that powerful nations like America, which have until now turned a blind eye towards Pakistan, give a stern message to Pakistan.... It is time for tough action against the crook."

¶23. "TERRORISTS BANGED MORE THAN TAJ AND OBEROI, THEY SHOOK OUR POLITICIANS" editorial in the December 2, 2008, Mumbai edition of left-of-center Marathi daily LOKSATTA (circ: 550,000). "As Mumbai recovers from the havoc wrought by the terrorists, the city's political atmosphere has intensified. As expected, the central and

state government are playing the blame game and opposition parties of course are doing their bit to keep the curry boiling. While the Union Home minister and Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister have resigned, and the Maharashtra Chief minister is likely to be dethroned, the resignations are no solution to the security and intelligence lapses during the recent terrorist outbreak. It is rather shameful to acknowledge the fact that the three senior police officers, who died on duty in their bid to curb terrorist violence, did not have sturdy workable bullet-proof jackets. The Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh later commented that the needs of the police force have been neglected. Not just the police force, but many crucial aspects of Mumbai's life have been neglected.... The latest terrorist attacks have not just affected Mumbaikars, but they have unsparingly placed the state and central government and Mumbai's elected representatives on the firing line. The attack has upturned the political equations and notions surrounding traditional vote banks. The mastermind of this terrorist plot, whoever he is, seems to be having a reasonable understanding of the political contours of India..."

¶24. "SHIVRAJ PATIL HAD TO GO" editorial in December 2 Kolkata centrist AZAD HIND (circ: 45,000). "Both Hindus and Muslims were angry with Home Minister Shivraj Patil. Serial bomb blasts (in recent past)...made the Sangh Parivar (BJP's hardcore wing) mad with fury. They became thirsty for the blood of ATS (Anti-terrorism Squad) Chief

NEW DELHI 00003041 008 OF 008

Hemant Karkare... Several cases were progressing in such a way that it created an apprehension that there may be some huge incidents...which will be successful in covering up the case of 'Hindu Terrorism'. Then the biggest terrorist attack happened in Mumbai. The terrorists precisely ambushed Karkare's car and shot him down... Now nobody knows what will happen to the Malegaon case, but there is a concern that this case will go to cold storage. In the very beginning of the Mumbai carnage Karkare was killed and this gives the impression that this terrorist attack was mainly targeted to take the life of Karkare. It was such a big dimensional conspiracy that thousands of innocents have come under its fold."

MULFORD